

Coast Guard



Shield of Freedom



August
2005

ASIAN ENGAGEMENT

EXPERIENCE JARVIS' MONTH-LONG MISSION
TO RAISE THE INTERACTION TO A NEW LEVEL
AMONG THE WORLD'S COAST GUARDS.

Heroes

The world's best Coast Guard

LT. CMDR. JEFFREY PASHAI, USCGR



PA3 SANDRA BARTLETT

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Pashai was hand-picked by the Coast Guard to be part of a state/interagency team assigned to dismantling a foreign terrorist organization entrenched in Iraq, a first in the history of U.S. counter-terrorism activity.

Because of the sensitivity of their mission, their success and specific individual accomplishments cannot be revealed. Their accomplishments, however, substantially contributed to the advancement of U.S. government interests and displayed exceptional devotion to duty under extremely adverse conditions.

For his efforts, Pashai was awarded the Bronze Star. The citation reads as follows: Pashai distinguished himself by exception-

ally meritorious service as a Farsi Linguist and Interviewer serving as the Coast Guard and U.S. Southern Command Representative to the Combined Joint Task Force Seven and Department of State, Baghdad, Iraq, from March 22, 2004 to May 7, 2004.

His heroic efforts helped ensure that the Department of Defense and National Security Council's highest priorities for collecting intelligence, and identifying terrorists were met and exceeded. Pashai's accomplishments reflect great credit upon himself, the Coast Guard, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense.

Story by 7th Dist.



Coast Guard

U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Homeland
Security

August 2005

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A group of CGC Jarvis crewmembers demonstrates how to make themselves more visible to rescuers should it be necessary to abandon ship

Photo by PA1 Amy Thomas, PacArea

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LISTEN AND LEARN

A Coast Guard Station Gloucester rescue boat crew and Air Station Cape Cod Jayhawk aircrew conduct a search and rescue demonstration in Gloucester harbor during a commercial fishing vessel safety workshop June 24. Photo by PA3 Lisa Hennings, 1st Dist.



UP FRONT

PARADE OF SHIPS

NEW YORK, May 25 — The CGC Penobscot Bay escorts the USS Carr into New York Harbor during the Parade of Ships. The Parade of Ships is the annual event to kick off Fleet Week.

PHOTO BY PA2 MIKE LUTZ, PADET NEW YORK



UP FRONT







UP FRONT

ELBOW GREASE REQUIRED

PORTSMOUTH, Va., June 22 — BM3 Roscoe Deel cleans a buoy on the deck of the CGC Frank Drew. The Frank Drew's aids to navigation mission is essential to ensure ships make it into the port to import more than 16 million tons of cargo and export more than 26 million tons of coal yearly.

PHOTO BY PA1 DONNIE BRZUSKA, LANTAREA

UP FRONT

LIGHTNING STRIKES

NEWPORT, Ore. July 21 — Lightning strikes ground near Coast Guard Station Yaquina Bay in Newport during a large storm that struck the Oregon coast.

PHOTO BY BM3 LEVI RENFREW, STATION YAQUINA BAY





560 Gallons of Oil Threaten Endangered Species

VENICE, La., June 12 — The Coast Guard's ability to respond to an incident of major environmental impact was put to the test when, on June 12, an oil spill near Breton Island refuge swept ashore on the island.

In the waters of Breton Sound, 22-miles off the coast of Louisiana, on a tiny island of sand and brush, sits the Breton Island National Wildlife Refuge. This small scrap of land is an important protected nesting area for thousands of brown pelicans. These birds were placed on the endangered species list after pesticide use decimated their population in the 1950s and 1960s.

The oil, approximately 560 gallons, was discovered by the crew of a nearby oil platform who were returning to the platform after being evacuated for Tropical Storm Arlene. Containment booms and absorbent pads were deployed as required, but the impact to the wildlife was already significant.

"It was a minimum amount of oil but it just happened to impact a very sensitive area," said MST1 Matt Tilimon, a Marine Science Technician at Marine Safety Office New Orleans. "It was the most significant impact to wildlife that I've ever seen. It was shocking at first to see the amount of affected birds."

In all, a total of 975 birds were impacted by the spill, 727 of which either died on the island or did not make it through the rehabilitation process.



It was a daunting task but the Coast Guard was not alone in their endeavors. Personnel and volunteers from the U.S. Wildlife & Fisheries; the Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research Society; Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education, Inc.; the International Bird Rescue and Research Center and employees of Amarada Hess all came together to keep the impact of the spill to the environment and to the birds at a minimum. This was the first time all of these entities had worked together at the same time.

"All the agencies worked well together," said Tilimon. "It was a difficult situation that we had to deal with, and everybody came together and put forth a really good effort."

The birds were captured by specially trained personnel from WRE and put into boxes. From there they were taken to Venice, where veterinarians and volunteers had set up a rehabilitation center to care for the birds in an attempt to clean and save as many as possible.

"The majority of the work was the bird recovery and rehab," said Tilimon. "We were working with something we're not used to, but everyone pulled together. We have to make sure the whole response works as smoothly as possible."

Story and photos by PA3 Robert Reed,
8th Dist.



Above: MST1 Matt Tilimon helps collect a live bird from a pool of water on Breton Island. Specially trained workers from Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education, Inc. were the only people allowed to actually touch the birds during their capture.

Left: MST1 Matt Tilimon of Marine Safety Office New Orleans collects samples from the Breton National Wildlife Refuge off the coast of Louisiana June 14 after an oil spill affected more than 900 endangered brown pelicans on the island.

Coast Guard

America's Shield of Freedom

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Letters to the editor: Please limit remarks to 150 words or less. No names will be withheld. Provide rank, first and last name, phone number and unit. Letters may be condensed because of space. Not all letters will be published.

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Spot News

CUTTER VISITS MOROCCO

NAPLES, Italy, June 19 — Approximately 100 Coast Guardsmen aboard the CGC Bear arrived in Agadir, Morocco, today for a Theater Security Cooperation engagement. It was scheduled for the ship and crew as part of their 2005 deployment in the U.S. Navy Sixth Fleet area of operation. TSC efforts are designed to advance multinational interoperability, foster mutual commitments to regional stability, and develop relations to build on for future cooperation opportunities.

CUTTER SEIZES SHRIMP

GALVESTON, Texas, July 11 — The Coast Guard seized the catch of a commercial fishing boat at 12:30 a.m. today, for shrimping in waters off of the Texas coast before commercial shrimping season. The CGC Manowar detected the fishing boat Christina V approximately 12 miles South of Sabine Pass, Texas, during a routine patrol. The Manowar's crew discovered approximately 3,600 pounds of illegal shrimp on board worth an estimated \$9,500.

NEW SECTOR ONLINE

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich., June 27 — The Coast Guard base officially changed its name from Coast Guard Group/Marine Safety Office/Base Sault Ste. Marie to Sector Sault Ste. Marie today. Sector Sault Ste Marie has been servicing the Northern Great Lakes since its construction in 1952, and will be one of four Groups within the Ninth Coast Guard District to undergo the necessary name and command structure changes needed to become a Coast Guard Sector. The base currently supports six cutters, two Marine Safety Offices, nine small boat stations, two Electronic Support Detachments, and one Aids to Navigation Team.

8 PEOPLE RESCUED

ALAMEDA, Calif., June 29 — The Coast Guard rescued eight people today at approximately 11 p.m. after their 40-foot motor vessel collided with a pier near Hunter's Point in San Francisco. Receiving a may-day call, the Coast Guard immediately deployed two small boats from Station San Francisco, a patrol

boat from Group San Francisco and an HH-65 helicopter from Air Station San Francisco. The Coast Guard transferred all eight passengers to local paramedics waiting on a nearby pier. Three people were seriously injured and three others sustained minor injuries. All six injured people were taken to San Francisco General Hospital. The cause of the accident is under investigation by the San Francisco Police Department.

U.S., RUSSIA JOINT PATROL

WESTERN PACIFIC, July 2 — The CGC Jarvis approached the Russian Northeast Border Directorate vessel Vorovsky in preparation for the first joint security exercise of the North Pacific Heads of Coast Guard Agencies. Together this joint patrol demonstrates the resolve of both nations to combat illegal activity on the high seas. Today at 10 a.m. was the designated rendezvous time in the isolated Western Pacific about 450 miles southwest of Alaska's Aleutian Island chain and 250 miles east of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula.



WebHot!

<http://www.uscg.mil/d1/units/nrftc>

The Northeast Regional Fisheries Training Center is a 1st District unit and a tenant command of Air Station Cape Cod. NRFTC serves as a residential training facility for prospective and current Living Marine Resources and Maritime Law Enforcement Officers.



Their area of responsibility encompasses First and Fifth District Coast Guard commands as well as local town and state enforcement officers.

Think your Web site is unique? E-mail: dmosley@comdt.uscg.mil



Grounded

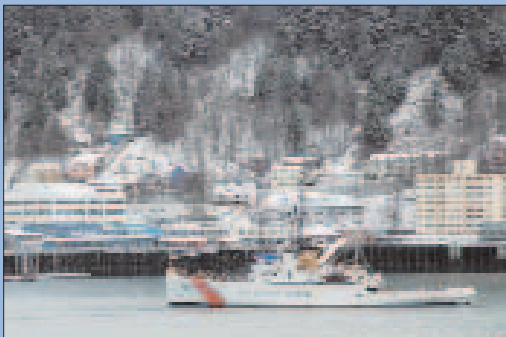
HONOLULU, July 2

Honolulu-based Coast Guard assets are responding to a 145 foot motor vessel that ran aground at about 2 a.m., today, and is taking on water approximately 1,000 miles northwest of Oahu.

The motor vessel Quest retrieved 13,900 gallons of diesel fuel, black oil and oily water from the ship. The CGC Walnut removed approximately 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel from the ship.

Photo by Lt.jg. Robert Moomaw, CGC Walnut

That was then, this is now...



PAC ROGER WETHERELL, 17th DIST

THE CGC ACUSHNET VISITS JUNEAU, ALASKA.

NOW...

KETCHIKAN, Alaska, July 12 - The CGC Acushnet returned home today after a 45-day patrol of protecting Alaska's waterways, ensuring safe fishing operations, and renewing relationships with communities around the Bering Sea. For the first time, the Acushnet also visited Provideniya, a city in the province of Chukotka, Russia, where crewmembers visited the Bering Sea museum and witnessed a traditional Russian dance recital by local youths. The Acushnet patrols almost exclusively in Alaskan waters. It is now the sole remaining 213-foot class cutter in the Coast Guard.

THEN...

Late 1978, the cutter embarked on a patrol to participate in the Global Weather experiment, a 140 nation effort to gather worldwide weather information. In 82 days, the cutter covered more than 18,000 miles from Peru to New Zealand. For this operation, the Acushnet received the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Cutter seizes 6,700 pounds of cocaine



ASTZ MICHAEL SPENCER

A boat crew from the CGC Campbell transfers bales of cocaine from the vessel Ocean Mistery to the Campbell in the Caribbean Sea July 6.

MIAMI, July 6 — The crew of the Maine based CGC Campbell seized 6,700 pounds of cocaine and detained five suspected smugglers 50 miles south of Cayos de Albuquerque, Colombia, today.

The Campbell, on routine patrol in the Caribbean Sea, spotted someone aboard the 65-foot Honduran fishing vessel Ocean Mistery dumping bales into the water. One of the bales was recovered by Campbell crewmen and tested positive for cocaine. The Campbell directed the Ocean Mistery to stop.

The captain of the Ocean Mistery did not comply with the order to stop his vessel

until the crew of the Campbell fired warning shots from their .50-caliber machine gun.

The Ocean Mistery's captain complied after the warning shots, and a law enforcement team from the Campbell boarded and took control of the vessel and crew without incident.

The contraband and five suspected smugglers were turned over to law enforcement and Department of Justice officials for prosecution. The Ocean Mistery was turned over to the Honduran government.

Story by Lt. j.g. Neil White, CGC Campbell



Golden Wings

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas, June 24 — Lt. j.g. Jeanine McIntosh becomes the first Coast Guard African-American female aviator during a graduation ceremony at the naval air station, here, today. She will be a C-130 pilot in the 14th District, once she completes specialized training.

Photo by PA2 Andrew Kendrick, 8th Dist.

Transportation Award

KAPOLEI, HAWAII, June 18 — Air Station Barbers Point was awarded the National Transportation Award for 2004. Operating from the Central Pacific hub of Oahu, Air Station Barbers Point provided mission-critical transportation support to international, federal, state, and local agencies throughout the Pacific Rim in 2004. With a squadron of four C-130s, the air base surpassed all expectations executing search and rescue, humanitarian, law enforcement, homeland security, and national defense missions. The award is presented annually to industry or to an organization of the U.S. government who has made exemplary contributions to the transportation industry in support of national security.

14th Dist.

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

CARTAGENA, Colombia, June 25 — The CGC Forward from Portsmouth, Va., and the International Training Division from Yorktown, Va., wrapped up their participation in UNITAS today. UNITAS is a two-week naval exercise involving 18 ships, two submarines and 18 fixed and rotary wing aircraft from Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and the United States. The Forward operated under the control of the U.S. Navy Destroyer Squadron Six.

LantArea

BEYOND THE T

**STORY AND
PHOTOS BY
PA3 L.F.
CHAMBERS,
LANTAREA**

THE COAST GUARD'S MOBILE TRAINING AND EDUCATION TEAM DEPLOY TO AZERBAIJAN TO HELP THE COUNTRY'S MARITIME BRIGADE DEVELOP AND RUN THEIR NEWLY BUILT OPERATIONS CENTER.

The Coast Guard team was a long way from Virginia – they had traveled some 6,500 miles in 48 hours. Their destination was Azerbaijan, a country located between Iran and Russia off the Caspian Sea. They were tired, but there wasn't a chance to sleep as the tiny taxicab they were in careened around a hairpin corner at top speed, barely missing two pedestrians and sending a flock of pigeons scrambling. The passengers barely winced — one even chuckled as the car dodged in and out of traffic, the driver occasionally cursing in Russian as they sped to the first training session.

This was a fairly standard commute for the members of the Mobile Training and Education Team, part of the International Training Division based at Training Center Yorktown, Va. Some of the team had been to more than 20 countries in the last year alone, picking up frequent flyer miles and sea stories along the way.

MTTs are deployed to help train foreign coast guards in everything from proper boarding procedures and search and rescue to legislative infrastructure development. The members have to be specialists and generalists, adapting to the needs of the host country.

Teams visit approximately 50 countries a year and members average 180 days deployed. From visit to visit, MTTs are aiding the growth of budding organizations, said ITD's



MAP OF AZERBAIJAN FROM CIA WORLD FACTBOOK WEB SITE

commanding officer, Cmdr. Matthew Creelman. He's seeing improvements all over the world.

"We're helping to chart the future for new coast guards," said Creelman. A host country makes a request for training through the local U.S. Embassy, and embassy officials make the proper arrangements for a Coast Guard training team to deploy.

The teams are usually small — comprising between three and six instructors from a broad range of ratings and backgrounds. Flexibility is a must for these crews, because assets, skills and experience vary from place to place. Patience seems to be the watchword for most MTT members.

This team had deployed to train the Azerbaijan Maritime Brigade in developing and running the brigade's newly built operations

center.

Lt.j.g. Joe Castaneda, Auxiliarist Steve Magarro, DC1 Fernando Ocon, and MK2 Brad Andreasen were in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, where they were teaching the Maritime Operations Planning and Management course at the Azeri naval base.

Because Azerbaijan is a former Soviet Republic, most people older than 20 speak both the native tongue, Azeri, and Russian.

Almost without fail, modern technical terms are conveyed in Russian because the modern technology was developed during the Soviet era, said translator Tarlan Gahramanova.

"Technical terms don't always translate well," said Creelman. "It takes extra preparation and a basic understanding of how language works." This course would be taught in English, with Gahramanova translating the MTT's lessons into Russian.

The classroom was a small, dark place with a large portrait of Azerbaijan's mustached president, Ilham Aliyev, looking over it from the front wall. A cross-sectioned AK-47 hung on display on another wall, with descriptions of the parts in Russian below it. When the windows were not curtained, one could just make out the Caspian Sea with its oil rigs and various boats and ships moored there.

As students in their black uniforms filed in, Castaneda discussed

P OF THE SPEAR



FOREIGN SHORES

Above: A former U.S. Coast Guard 82-foot patrol boat, now part of the Azeri Maritime Brigade, lies at anchor in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Right: Members of the Azeri Maritime Brigade listen during an operations center class taught by the Coast Guard Mobile Training and Education Team in Baku, Azerbaijan April 14.



details with the translator and other team members prepared powerpoint slides and handouts.

"Sometimes it can be a real challenge to keep the attention of a class," said Castaneda. "We really have to work hard to keep it interesting." Most class segments began with a funny video, or an exchange of sea stories.

The week-long course they were teaching in Baku consisted of different aspects of maritime law operations. The MTT members rotated in and out of the teacher role, each applying his own style to the material and relating his own experiences.

"We're not trying to tell them how to do things, or tell them the Coast Guard way is the only way," said Castaneda. "We want there to be an exchange of ideas ... we want them to take the training and apply it in a way that works for them."

Classes on narcotics identifica-

tions, and operation center planning culminated in a class exercise where groups ran mock situations and presented their responses to the class. It was during this exercise that students could put their experience and prior training into context with the training they had received during the week.

"Hopefully, it gets them thinking 'Is there a better way?'" said Castaneda. "We try to help them look beyond tradition."

The students were attentive throughout the week, asking questions and nodding when they recognized the shared challenges of their service and the U.S. Coast Guard. Many of them wore Coast Guard seal pins on their uniforms, earned when they graduated previous courses taught by MTTs.


"Whether it's the first time or the sixth time we visit a country, there's always an impact," said Castaneda. "Sometimes there is no quantitative way to measure it – it doesn't fit on

a nice little bar graph."

At the graduation, the base captain arrived to shake hands with the teachers and congratulate the students. There were "thanks" said in varying levels of English as the students stood and received their graduation certificates.

"It's rewarding to see their heartfelt thanks when you finish a mission," said Creelman. "You can see in their eyes how much you've made an impact."

Castaneda said he sees success in every mission on which the MTTs deploy.

"What we do goes beyond traditional measures," said Castaneda. "We are essentially diplomats. Some of the junior people we meet are going to be the future admirals and generals – maybe presidents – of these countries. We're building relationships with them now." 



HELPING HANDS

Ensign Neal Corbin helps a Haitian man onto the flight deck where the migrants will be placed until they are repatriated. Blankets, mats and toothbrushes were given to each migrant as they came aboard April 30.

Haitian operations

Story and photos by
PA2 John Edwards,
LantArea



Under the dark of night, the CGC Dependable cuts through the Atlantic Ocean like a knife. Engine exhausts glow bright red as the cutter steamed at 16-knots toward its destination. Crewmembers busied themselves in preparation for the long and arduous night ahead. Sleep would be sparse; work would be plentiful.

"Now set AMIO phase one, now set AMIO phase one," bellowed a voice over the loud speakers. Crewmembers sprung into action throughout the ship to quickly man their billets and prepare for anything.

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The whine of an HH-65 Dolphin helicopter was heard droning overhead. Its powerful spotlight, focused on a sailboat below, turned a dark night at sea into day. In the distance, an Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos helicopter was approached quickly.

"Man the port and starboard boat decks," someone yelled from the bridge wing. "Man the port and starboard boat decks, aye," was the response. Within minutes a rigid hull inflatable boat and a motor surf boat were placed in the choppy water and headed toward the rescue helicopter's spotlight.

Aboard the 50-foot sailboat were 132 Haitian migrants. Some shielded their eyes from the intense lights as others began to douse the ship's sails, accepting the fact that their voyage had come to an early end.

"Remain calm and stay seated," Pierre Carrie, a translator with the Adriana Shacked Translator LLZ, said to them in Haitian Creole. The crewmembers of the small boats began to hand over life jackets to the migrants.

"Once they were all outfitted with life jackets, the women and children were removed first and carefully put aboard one of the small boats," said Seaman Benjamin Murphy, the rescue swimmer aboard one of the small boats assisting with the embarkation. "From there they were brought back to the Dependable where they were processed," he said.

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Many of the migrants seem to know what was expected of them, which suggests that this was not their first time being picked up by the Coast Guard. "Many of them try over and over again to leave Haiti," Carrie said. "They are just trying to get to a better life," he said.

EYES ON THE HORIZON

Right: Seaman Kenneth Breeden keeps a watchful eye on his shipmates as the CGC Dependable passes in the Windward Pass April 27. The Dependable is a 210-foot cutter homeported in Cape May, N.J.

BOTTOMS UP

Below: A rigid hull inflatable boat is raised by a davit on the CGC Dependable May 4.



One by one, migrants climbed the Jacob's ladder where they are met by a team of Coast Guardsmen who began the embarkation process. This process included a general frisk for weapons, having their picture taken for identification purposes, issuing of blankets and a toothbrush, being given an ID bracelet and a quick medical examination for any obvious health issues.

"A pre-screening on a migrant enables us to be proactive in identifying any source of complications that may occur," said HS2 Todd Brischetto. "Preventative measures save lives," he said.

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Most of the migrants suffered from dehydration, stomach cramps and headaches. They had left Cap-Haitian five days prior and were already without food and water.

Six hours later, all the migrants had been removed from their unstable vessel and placed on the flight deck of the cutter. Most slept, while others talked in hushed tones among themselves.

Their sailboat was doused with fuel and set on fire to prevent it from becoming a hazard to navigation.

With all hands accounted for and potentially, 132

lives saved from what could have been a horrible ordeal at sea, the Dependable and its crew had just begun to get started.

After constructing a tent, a make-shift shower and bathroom for the migrants to use, crewmembers began a six-hour on/six-hour off security watch rotation to ensure the safety of the migrants as well as the rest of the crew.

"It's hot out here and it's difficult, but it's important to have qualified personnel out there protecting them and keeping the ship safe," said OS2 Kyle Gerkins.

.....

The migrants were given decks of cards and boxes of dominos to pass the time. They were fed twice a day, which proved to be a difficult task for the cooks aboard. "Basically you're making a full meal every four hours," said FS3 Pete McAndrew. "The work is hard, but it is a satisfying feeling to know that you have fed these people the first meal they have had in days."

"It's all about team work and getting the job done," said FS3 Steven Jones.

Although the workload as well as the stress load



increased for crewmembers, positive attitudes were found and shipmates helping shipmates was a common occurrence.

"This is one of the reasons I joined this service," said Cmdr. Mike Christian, commanding officer of the Dependable. "I have seen crewmembers taking on extra duties and extra watches because one of their shipmates may have been up for an extended period of time or had other duties to attend to."

.....

The routine continued for three and a half days. Crewmembers slept when they could and spent the rest of the time working or car-

ing for the migrants. Some migrants expressed their unease about going back to Haiti as they chanted "Haiti no, Miami yes." Other migrants tried to quiet the chanters down.


As the Dependable pulled into Port-au-Prince Harbor, the migrants, although tired, began talking and laughing with obvious relief to see home.

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Once the Dependable put down anchor, two Haitian coast guard boats pulled up along its starboard side. Migrants were taken in groups of ten off the flight deck where they were checked off a list and given their personal

belongings back.

With a single hand on the shoulder of the person in front of them, they were led to the forward section of the ship where they climbed down the Jacob's ladder and back into the custody of their own country. The entire repatriation evolution took less than two hours.

As the Dependable made its way out of Haiti's harbor, crewmembers began the task of returning the ship to its normal routine. As they physically prepared the ship for its next mission, they mentally prepared themselves to be always ready, always Dependable. 



MEDICAL NEEDS

Left: HS2 Todd Brischetto attempts to give a man who is suffering from severe dehydration an IV of saline solution April 30. Brischetto also helped other migrants who complained of stomach cramps and headaches.

WHERE TO

Below: A Haitian man speaks with Pierre Carrie, a translator aboard the CGC Dependable, about where they are going May 3. 132 Haitian migrants were picked up on April 30th ten miles south of West Caicos Island in the Bahamas.



Asian enga

Story and photos by PA1 Amy Thomas,
PacArea



agement





Just after 10 a.m. May 23, a 25-piece band lined up on a pier at the Japan coast guard's Maritime Disaster Prevention Complex in Yokohama; a city about 40 miles south of Tokyo. In the distance, following behind a tug and barge, the red and blue racing stripe on the bow of the CGC Jarvis was vaguely visible.

The Jarvis made its way to the pier, and the band members raised their instruments and struck up a rendition of *Semper Paratus*. Next to the band, JCG officers waited in formation to greet the Jarvis and its crew.

The Jarvis approached the pier and moments later a deckhand from the 378-foot Honolulu-based cutter tossed a heaving line to an awaiting JCG line handler, signifying the start of the Jarvis' month-long mission to raise the interaction among the world's coast guards to a new level.

"Partnership is the key to making good things happen," said Capt. Michael Blair, commanding officer of the Coast Guard's Far East Activities. "Throughout the world, the U.S. is trying to build better relationships and better understandings with other countries."

During a meeting of the North Pacific Heads of Coast Guards in Canada last fall, Korea Coast Guard Commissioner Lee Seung Jae suggested to U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thomas H. Collins that Collins send a cutter to Asia. Initially it would be sent just to South Korea, but Japan was quickly

added to the itinerary – to give the crews the opportunity to get some hands on operational engagement with each other.

"This exchange just moves us closer to being able to cooperatively respond to any situation," said Capt. Michael Jett, the Jarvis' commanding officer. "Also, it puts a name on the other end of the phone line when we need cooperation for pressing maritime issues."

The NPHCG is an information-sharing network established by the United States, Japan, South Korea, People's Republic of China, and Russia coast guard services. It meets regularly to discuss, among other topics, ways to improve the enforcement of international fisheries laws and the prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activity along the Pacific Ocean's Exclusive Economic Zones. There is keen focus on the EEZ of these countries and the prevention of illegal fishing.

"There are limited [fish] resources that need to be protected," Jett said. "We hope to send the message that proper management and conservation will be to everyone's long-term benefit."

The week in Yokohama was a busy one for both the U.S. and Japan coast guards. Using the 3,500-ton JCG patrol vessel PL31 Izu as a platform, boarding teams from each service spent a day demonstrating their procedures for taking control of the crew on a hostile vessel, and the JCG showed off



their small boat maneuvering skills.

The Jarvis also participated in the JCG's annual Sea Review and Comprehensive Drill; the rough equivalent of the U.S. Navy's Fleet Week. This three-day event was the JCG's chance to show Japan's Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation the capabilities of their crews and surface and air assets.

"Sea Review is a strong message by the Japan coast guard of their many capabilities, strengths, number of assets, and the fact that they're working with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force," said Blair. "Other nations seeing these events would be impressed by their capabilities."

Hundreds of spectators, lining the rails of the reviewing vessels, watched as fire-fighting boats, spouting red, yellow, blue and green water from fire monitors, kicked off the start of the Sea Review. Following this display, the JCG performed elaborate formation flights with fixed wing and rotor aircraft, rescue drills and multiple law enforcement take-down maneuvers.

Jett said that because JCG deals with encroachment issues everyday, the U.S. Coast Guard has much to learn from JCG's highly developed multi-unit tactics to stop suspicious vessels, tactics that could be used to stop a USS Cole-type attack.

"While we could teach them a few things, we probably have more to learn from them," he said, adding that the JCG's individual profession-

al skills, such as rescue diving, also warrant a closer look.

Jett said he was most impressed by the newness and quality of the JCG's technology. Their state-of-the-art ships and small boats are equipped to handle grand-scale disasters and to fight fires both in and out of the port. He also said JCG's ability to tow floundering merchant vessels could save millions of dollars in clean up costs and the associated costs to the environment.

"Deepwater is clearly needed soon," he said, referring to the U.S. Coast Guard's long term project to replace its aging cutters with a fleet of new, highly-advanced ships.

The U.S. Coast Guard's presence in Japan first appeared in 1947 when Capt. Frank Meals worked with General Douglas MacArthur to establish the Japan Maritime Safety Agency that eventually evolved into the Japan Coast Guard. Following that, in 1952, the U.S. Coast Guard's Far East Section (now Far East Activities) opened a long-range aid to navigation station at Yokota Air Base. Although it worked with the Japanese government to develop a coast guard modeled after the United States', Blair agrees that there is much to be learned from the JCG.

"We share information and officers, and are continually improving," Blair said. "Japan is one of our strongest allies and we are very optimistic about the future."

With the completion of its Japanese visit, the Jarvis headed



west toward South Korea for the second leg of the journey. The cutter arrived in the Port of Incheon; a city about 20 miles east of Seoul, June 3. And, once again it moored to the sound of military marches; this time played by the Korea coast guard band.

The Maritime Safety Division of the Korean National Maritime Police Agency was founded in 1953. The agency picked up steam about 15 years ago and is now known as the Korea coast guard. The KCG gradually added missions such as search and rescue, fisheries

and pollution control. Its transition from police agency to multi-faceted maritime service will be complete with the construction of a new headquarters in Incheon this year.

"Korea coast guard is such a professional organization," said Cmdr. Todd Gatlin, the U.S. Coast Guard Liaison Officer for the Jarvis' visit to Incheon. "They had set very high standards and didn't want to fall below those standards. They did the best job they could to meet those expectations."

ASIAN ALLIES

Page 18-19: A Korea coast guard member lies on the deck of the KCG ship 3005 during an exercise with the CGC Jarvis June 8.

Page 20, top left: The Republic of Korea flag is reflected in the CGC Jarvis ship's bell.

Page 20, middle left: MK1 Chris Robson monitors the intake of fuel into the CGC Jarvis' fuel tanks June 9.

Page 21, middle right: Lt.j.g. Brian Wendleton from Pacific Area Intelligence Command in Alameda, Calif., took time out from his normal responsibilities to travel to Korea and translate between crewmembers on the CGC Jarvis and the Korea coast guard ship 3005.

Right: A Korea Coast Guard member stands by with a life ring during search and rescue demonstrations by the KCG ship 3005 and the CGC Jarvis.

Opposite page: ET2 Kris Doelitsch helps load food supplies on board the CGC Jarvis.

Page 23-24: Two Japan coast guard small boats perform maneuvers near the CGC Jarvis, which is tied up at the JCG Maritime Disaster Prevention Complex here. Jarvis crewmembers and JCG ship PL31 IZU crewmembers spent the morning demonstrating their capabilities and conducting law enforcement exercises for spectators and media May 24.



Gatlin reported to Yongsan Army Garrison in 2003 to work with the U.S. Navy and the Korean navy on harbor defense and port security. He said that before he arrived no one had approached the KCG about collaborating. When Commissioner Lee broached the idea of a U.S. Coast Guard cutter visit to Asia at the NPHCG meeting last year, Gatlin stepped up to the plate.

"Our coast guards are going to become a lot closer," Gatlin said. "We haven't worked together much and there's a lot we can do."

Although there wasn't time for as many exercises, as with the JCG, there was still plenty of information and practices to exchange. The three thousand-ton KCG 3005, a two-year-old high-tech patrol vessel, moored outboard of the Jarvis to better accommodate the drills and demonstrations shared between the two crews.

The first day of exercises included a Jarvis' boarding team demonstrating its boarding and non-compliant vessel seizure tactics using the 3005's wide passageways and modern bridge as a playing field. Then, with

the Jarvis' crew lining Jarvis' flight deck rails, the KCG surprised the onlookers with a thunderous display by neutralizing an explosive ordinance found hidden in the 3005's hangar.

The Jarvis also held a damage control "round robin" to show an audience of the KCG members their methods of patching busted pipes and operating dewatering pumps. The Jarvis' deck force members entertained the crowd by testing their own adeptness on the proper way to don a survival suit, followed by a demonstration of several different abandon ship techniques.

On the second day of planned exercises, the two ships got underway for a series of helicopter rescue hoist drills and law enforcement tactics demonstrations. Jett said he was impressed by the KCG's alertness and responsiveness to encroachment dangers, and attributes KCG's efficiency largely to their geographical position in the world.

The Jarvis' visit to Japan and Korea aimed to nurture existing relationships, as well as build new ones. Jett said there is always someone trying to smuggle



contraband, humans or weapons across international borders and seaports, and worldwide shipping brings increased security concerns and the potential for terrorist activity. Although there are distinct differences among the coast guards, they share one basic desire: security.

"This exchange opens communication and hopefully provides the first steps to stop illegal activity and

ensure mutual protection from organizations that mean to cause harm," Jett said.


The Jarvis only had eight weeks to prepare for this trip. Boatswain's mates and seamen had to prep and prime the ship for painting, food service specialists had to plan for several high-quality meals and VIP receptions, the navigators had to make sure they had all the correct charts and flags, and the engineers needed to



overhaul the quarterdeck gear to make sure it was in perfect condition.

Korean and Japanese translators were gathered from around the country, including two Korean-American Coast Guard Academy cadets; two Army Specialists; one from the U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area Command staff; and two from Far East Activities. Research was needed to explore the cultural expectations of Korea

and Japan, and drills needed to be rehearsed. In addition, because of transfer season, the Jarvis faced personnel shortages and relied on several crewmembers assigned temporarily to fill the gaps.

"We would have loved more time, but that's the way it goes," said Jett. "Jarvis' crew rallied hard and I feel they met the challenge. But then again, they are the CGC Jarvis." 



Giving back to t

STORY BY LT. PETER MELNICK, AIR STATION SITKA

Air Station Sitka is located on a remote island in the middle of Southeast Alaska. Thick fog, freezing rain, howling wind and heavy snow are everyday factors helicopter crews face when called to fly on one of the unit's many rescue missions. Since the duty is dangerous, many of the 200 Coast Guardsmen stationed in Sitka choose a pastime that does not remind them of the challenges they face when on a mission. For others, however, off-duty time is just the beginning of a second round of volunteer work that helps people.

In 2004, 10 Air Station Sitka personnel responded to fire alarms and calls for medical assistance as volunteers of the Sitka Fire Department. They volunteer as Emergency Medical Technicians, fire responders, dive team members and even a life flight paramedic. Most have volunteered for a year or more and some for as many as four years. ASTs, DCs and ITs are just a few of the rates that make up the volunteer force in Sitka. The volunteers stand three or four duty days a month with the fire department and often respond to other

AT THE READY

Right: Fireman Kelly Kezior tends a hose in a training exercise with the Sitka Fire department.



he community

cases during their off time.

As an Emergency Medical Technician, AST3 Zephyr Mays volunteers with the ambulance services in Sitka and Fireman Tara Molle is a volunteer fireman for the Sitka Fire Department.

"We get to help with everything — fighting fires, traffic accidents, traffic control, lifting power — you name it, we get to do it," said a smiling Molle.

Mays, one of the newer volunteers, says, "It's another call to duty and I like the excitement."

AST2 Noel Hutton has flown for one of the regions few private life flight services, logging more than 38 medevacs in the nation's only FAA approved air ambulance float plane, the DeHavilland Beaver. Acting as an in-flight paramedic, Hutton has flown to many small, remote villages to provide valuable medical services to native and rural communities in the region. On one particular case, Hutton even had the opportunity to deliver a baby in a village.

"It's an honor to have him," says Mike Motti, the supervisor of the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium Air Medical team. "It's great to have his level of medical training aboard the aircraft. He has also been to many of these villages as a member of a Coast Guard air crew, and that experience is priceless," he added.

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Besides helping the community, many of the volunteers gain valuable training that helps them with the jobs they perform in the Coast Guard. Incident containment, mass casualty response, and infection control are just some of the extra lessons that are given to the volunteers.

"When I fly for the Coast Guard, I am often the only person the victim can depend on for medical help. The extra training I get from volunteering with the fire department is very important. It is great for patient contact and it keeps me current with my Emergency Medical Technician certification," said Mays, a rescue swimmer for Air Station Sitka.

Hutton echoes Mays and lauds the added benefits, "It's nice to work with other professionals in the air ambulance industry and to share experiences that we have had. I've gained a lot of knowledge that I have used for the Coast Guard."

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Volunteering for the fire department or Air Ambulance service is not without a good share of danger as well. Molle recalls entering a burning building to look for people that may have been trapped by a fire.

"I remember pulling up to the house and seeing

flames coming out of the windows. It was an energy rush, it was the real deal, it was dangerous but I was ready," recalled Molle.

Of course, flying in Alaska usually means flying in the infamous poor weather. Hutton said that he has flown into several small, remote villages, such as Angoon and Pelican, which do not have runways for airplanes. Floatplanes are used to land in the surrounding bays and then water-taxied to a dock or to the beach in order to load patients into the aircraft. Landing on the water can be quite a challenge, especially in the insidious weather, with which even experienced floatplane pilots never grow comfortable.

"You put a lot of faith in the pilots flying those aircraft," said Hutton. "Like the Coast Guard aircrews, they are some of the best in the world."

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Despite the challenges and extra responsibilities, Air Station Sitka volunteers can't seem to get enough. What began as a handful of people has quickly blossomed into 10 trained emergency response Coast Guard volunteers for the Sitka community.


"I do it because I want to give something back to the community. They were short of volunteers, and they needed help," said Mays. Mays is not alone in his desire to help others.

"The people we help, the patients and their families, they always say, 'Thank you.,'" said Molle. "It gives you a great feeling."

The Coast Guard has a tradition of helping people and it was only natural that Molle joined the Sitka Fire Department. Volunteer firefighting runs in her family.

"My dad was a volunteer firefighter and he was in the Coast Guard, too," said a beaming Molle under her new yellow helmet. A yellow helmet indicates that she is no longer a trainee but a full member of the Sitka fire department.

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Whether it's in a yellow helmet, an EMT vest, or a green and red flight suit, in the community of Sitka, it is not uncommon to see Coast Guard men and women standing side by side with the full-time emergency response personnel. A recent article in USA Today stated that, "Communities have given up thousands of police officers and firefighters to serve in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan." For 10 Coast Guard personnel in Sitka, they have been called to serve the community in their place. 

Innovation expo 2005

Tomorrow's thinkers recognized today

The Coast Guard's Innovation Expo headed to the Silicon Valley this year and focused on Domain Awareness and Integration. It also provided the avenue for exposure to innovative solutions to Coast Guard and homeland security challenges and displayed initiatives of Coast Guard innovators. Acknowledging previous locations for the Expo – New London, Conn.; Baltimore; and Savannah, Ga. – Coast Guard Commandant, Adm. Thomas H. Collins, noted in his opening remarks that the Santa Clara, Calif., venue was an appropriate fit for this ever-growing exposition because of it being the heart of one of the most innovative places in our nation.

This year, more than 1,500 Coast Guard, government, and industry personnel attended the Expo. During the Innovation Expo, the Coast Guard's Chief of Staff, Vice Adm. Thad Allen, officiated over the presentation of the Commandant's Quality and the Capt. Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Awards.

Commandant's Quality Awards

For the past ten years, the Coast Guard has used the Commandant's Quality Award to encourage, educate, publicize and recognize high-performing Coast Guard units. The CGC Jarvis was awarded honorable mention for its commitment effort to establish performance improvement initiatives and customer and mission focus. The following units were awarded the Bronze award, recognizing their performance improvement initiatives and customer service excellence. They were also given \$5,000 to encourage a culture that values performance excellence – Air Station Cape Cod, Maintenance Logistics Command Pacific Area Electronic Systems Division, Engineering Logistics Center Baltimore, Integrated Support Command Miami, and ISC Alameda. The MLC Pacific Naval Engineering Division and the Vessel Traffic System Houston/Galveston each were awarded the bronze award with the Spirit of Excellence Distinction and an additional \$2,500. Both units served as models for implementing leadership systems that remain intact over numerous years with various changes in command leadership.

Innovation Awards

Established in May 2003, the Captain Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Award was established to recognize the exemplary efforts of individual Coast Guard members or teams that have created or implemented

innovative solutions to Coast Guard challenges. The award's namesake, Capt. Thomsen, was recognized for inventing the chain-stopper, which is used by Coast Guard buoy tenders to secure and safely release the chain and sinker for buoys. There are currently four categories for this award: science or technology; operations or readiness; administration, training or support; and the Cmdr. Joel Magnussen Innovation Award for Management. Each category has two levels; innovator and implementer. This year marked the first time special recognition has been given to those partnering with non-Coast Guard organizations. Each of the eight award recipients received a personal memento from Adm. Collins and the originating unit will receive a one-time monetary award of \$10,000.

Science or Technology —

Innovation: Common Operational Picture and Vessel Identification, Correlation and Evaluation. The Common Operational Picture Management Team created a hierarchical architecture that permitted seamless data flow from Coast Guard Headquarters to the port level commands through the use of the existing Department of Defense standard for command and control systems, the Global Command and Control System and the Command and Control Personal Computer. The COP Management Team further promoted information sharing with external partners and facilitate the gathering of existing data sources through the creation of the Sensitive But Unclassified COP network. The Vessel Identification, Correlation & Evaluation command center displays adds significant value to the Coast Guard's COP, greatly improving Maritime Domain Awareness as it identifies vessels and automatically correlates COP vessel tracks against the numerous Coast Guard's available database sources.

Implementation: Improving Health services through Telemedicine. Patient care, maintaining fitness for duty, and the training of our health services personnel to provide primary care in isolated environments, are critical duties for our Coast Guard health services personnel. Implemented at four Coast Guard medical clinics in Alaska — three Alaska LORAN stations, and one Alaskan homeported cutter — technology has allowed users to transfer and retrieve information between Coast Guard sites as well as access specialty consultants at the Anchorage Military treatment facilities resulting in improvement for access to care, saving hundreds of lost work hours and avoids thousands of

dollars in travel to obtain health care costs.

Special Recognition: Homeport Internet Portal; Protecting the President with Infrared Technology.

Operations or Readiness —

Innovation: Helicopter Deployable Discrepancy Buoy. This buoy system, using proven “off the shelf” technology in the form of standard Coast Guard fast-water foam buoys with alloy chain and Dor-Mor pyramid anchors positioned by a laptop computer and Trimble NT200CG dGPS antenna, could be deployed by a tender, small boat or helicopter in order to respond to aids to navigation discrepancies. Tested by surface assets in the past, this system was successfully utilized by a Coast Guard HH-60 when the CGC Spar was in a maintenance status and it was necessary to deploy a discrepancy buoy.

Implementation: Coast Guard Operations on the ice in the Great Lakes. As a result of the 9th District’s International Ice Symposium held in the spring, a core group of subject matter experts worked to improve the methods, policies and associated equipment necessary to meet the extreme conditions and versatile needs of ice rescue. Ice Operations Centers of Excellence with new ice rescue equipment were established at one small boat station and two air stations. A new course titled “Ice Rescue Train the Trainer” was established to accompany new ice rescuer PQS and an Ice Rescue Manual. Airboats specifically designed for Coast Guard use on the Great Lakes were distributed to three key small boat stations. Currently under evaluation, is an amphibious all-terrain off-road vehicle to further reduce response time.

Special Recognition: Marine Firefighting for Shorebased Firefighters; Joint Initial Verification Team; Coast Guard Operations on the Ice in the Great Lakes; Coast Guard/Customs Border Protection Joint Boarding Program.

Administration, Training or Support —

Innovation: Rotary Wing Air Intercept Animated Simulation. The Aviation Training Center Performance Technology in cooperation with Rotary Wing Air Intercept subject matter experts developed simulations of air intercept scenarios as a tool when training HH-65 pilots to intercept, identify, and escort clear of restricted airspace certain aircraft during designated National Special Security Events. Of special note, the PT Branch was able to incorporate a Night Vision Goggle sight pic-

ture thus reducing the amount of training time necessary in order to qualify pilots to perform this mission. In addition to the reduction of the number of hours necessary for pilot qualification, there has been a significant increase in the overall safety and effectiveness of RWAI training by mitigating some the risk associated with the high-end skills being taught.

Implementation: Coast Guard Auxiliary Healthcare Support. Implemented in 2003, the Coast Guard Auxiliary healthcare support program is providing the volunteer services of 21 physicians and dentists and 27 licensed allied health credentialed providers to augment direct care services in Coast Guard clinics. In addition they are assisting active duty health services staffs in providing required training for operation units. Last year, Auxiliarists provided more than 5600 hours of healthcare augmentation at a value of \$340,000.

Honorable Mention: Training Distribution Engine; Motor Pool Reservation/Management System; Small Passenger Training Course

Cmdr. Joel Magnussen Innovation Award for Management —

Innovation: Measuring the “Health” of Personnel Data Records. The development of a leading indicator for the servicing personnel office has allowed tangible improvements in the management of Personal Data Records. The overall impact has been to enable the servicing personnel office to determine performance trends and make training, motivation and workload shifting interventions to reduce problems in PDR entry and pay.

Implementation: Centralized Resource Management. Implementation of this new protocol has provided the 5th District with a powerful, data-driven system perspective by which they are evaluating performance and basing resource allocations, allowing them to make better investment and management decisions to ensure the Coast Guard is able to get the most value from our people, assets and dollars.

Honorable Mention: West Coast Reserve Personnel Tracking Management System; Coast Guard Central: Where information and people find you; RMS: Better Decisions are just “Clicks” away; Enterprise Wide Activity-Based Costing Program.

Lt. Cmdr. Andrea M. Palermo,
Public Affairs Liaison to DHS

Tattoo, branding and piercing policy

Our current policy on tattoos, branding, piercing, and other forms of body art has not changed appreciably over the past thirty years. Our standards date back to a time when tattooing was restricted to a very small portion of society, branding was almost unheard of, and piercing was limited to earlobes. Consequently, there was little practical need to spell out, in great detail, the “dos” and “don'ts” of body art. Clearly, times have changed. Tattooing has exploded in popularity and now touches all segments of our society. While branding remains far less popular, it is common in some social circles. As for piercing, one only needs to walk through the shopping mall or along the beach to see how much things have changed over the course of the last decade or so. These trends have gradually eased their way into our military workforce. However, given our role as a military service and as a federal law enforcement agency along with our level of daily contact with the general public, we cannot allow ourselves to be guided solely by social trends and fashion.

Therefore, the time has come to recalibrate and affirm our standards for tattoos, branding, piercing, and other forms of body art that are consistent with the requirement to maintain a sharp, professional military image to the public we serve.

Our intent is not to draw undue attention to members of our team who already have tattoos or brands. Where appropriate, we have incorporated a grandfathering feature into certain aspects of the new policy that will apply to all current members for the remainder of their careers.

When evaluating tattoos, we consider three factors - content, location, and quantity. Content is the subject of the tattoo. That is, what does the picture depict. We have long prohibited tattoos that depict racist, indecent, extremist, or lawless themes. This standard remains unchanged in the new policy and will not be grandfathered. Content issues are more common among new accessions vice those personnel already on active duty. For more than thirty years, the head, face, and neck have been off-limits to all forms of body marking. The new policy adds hands, below the wrist bone, to the list of off-limit areas. The intent of this change is to ensure that every member of the Coast Guard can appear in a service dress uniform without any visible tattoos. Again, those who currently have tattoos on their hands will be grandfathered. Quantity is the greatest area of change in the new policy. Each month, our recruiting offices are faced with a growing number of applicants with near 100 percent coverage on their arms and/or legs. The new policy limits tattooing of exposed arms [between the elbow and wrist

bone] and legs [between the knee and ankle bone] to not more than 25 percent of the area based on a visual approximation. Tattoos that involve complex murals or serpentine designs that dominate a given area shall be regarded as full coverage within the bound area. Any current service member who is at or exceeds the 25% limit is prohibited from adding to the tattooed area.

Branding, a far less accepted form of body art, with unique medical concerns, will be far more restricted. No member may have more than one brand anywhere on their body. The brand may not exceed four inches in diameter. As with tattoos, brands may not appear on the head, neck, face, or hands.

Our policy regarding body piercing is also changing significantly. No piercings, other than those for ear-rings as described below, shall be made through the ear, nose, tongue, chin, eyebrow, or any other body part that would be visible while in any uniform. This prohibition applies to male and female members alike. Other piercings concealed by the uniform such as the navel or nipples are strongly discouraged due to the potential for infection and medical complications. Under no circumstance shall such concealed piercings and accompanying jewelry be visible through, or interfere with, the professional appearance of the member in uniform. Piercings in the ear shall not exceed two per ear lobe and shall be small and inconspicuous. Additional piercings in the ear lobes and cartilage are prohibited. Guidance regarding the wearing of earrings by women while in uniform, can be found in Uniform Regulations, COMDTINST M1020.6 (series). All members are prohibited from wearing forms of facial jewelry [other than earrings for women] while in uniform, aboard a military installation, or while attending a command sponsored event. Those personnel with pre-existing unauthorized piercings shall discontinue the use of those piercings to allow for eventual healing.

The forthcoming policy will also address, to a lesser extent, body mutilation and dental art. Both of these forms of body art are prohibited and will not be grandfathered.

Heavy tattooing found its way into our organization over time. It will take time to ease our way back to a more desirable state. For those members already a part of team Coast Guard, this will have very little impact on our current workforce.

Please see ALCOAST 340/05 regarding official policy. The point of contact is CWO Joanne Stevens. She can be reached at (202) 267-2239 by phone or jmstevens@comdt.uscg.mil by e-mail.

Excerpt, Flag Voice 252, Adm. Kenneth Venuto, CG-1



Housing

Average cost for a home is \$84,000. Brownsville's rental market for a two-bedroom, two-bath unfurnished apartment averages \$400 to 500 a month.

Facilities

Brownsville's community provides state-of-the-art care with two full-service hospitals, a cancer center, and numerous nursing homes and outpatient care facilities.

Weather

Brownsville's climate can best be described as semi-tropical. The summer months are hot with daytime temperatures in the low to mid 90's, but the winters are mild. In January, the coldest month, the average temperature is a cool 60 degrees. In fact, most winters pass without a freeze.

Education

The University of Texas at Brownsville is widely used by active duty members and their families.

Greetings from **MSSO** *Brownsville*

Coast Guard Marine Safety Satellite Office Brownsville is located in Brownsville, Texas. It was established before 1972 and relocated to its new location in April 2005.

Brownsville, Texas is located 30 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico on the Rio Grande River across from Matamoros, Mexico, and is within a five-hour drive of San Antonio.

The MSSO currently has a staff of one supervisor and four petty officers, two Reserve petty officers and Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 7-2 and directly supports Sector Corpus Christi.

The MSSO duties include: MTSA/ISPS enforcement, high interest vessel boardings/escorts; inspections of U.S. and foreign deep-draft merchant vessels; shipyard for construction and refurbishment of offshore oil platforms, U.S. barges and small passenger vessels; marine investigations for vessel casualties or accidents; pollution incidents and boating accidents involving commercial vessels. The MSSO area of responsibility extends 150 miles offshore and covers approximately 90 miles of coastline. The AOR board-

ers Mexico to the South and supports the area to the North with Sector Corpus Christi. The AOR consists of the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway, Brownsville Ship Channel and Ports of Brownsville and Harlingen.

The Port of Brownsville has approximately 150 deep draft vessel arrivals a year and is ranked 89th in the U.S. by tonnage per U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is ranked 4th for commerce shipped in bond through the United States from one foreign country to another.

Brownsville, Texas has a population of approximately 140,000 with all the usual necessities. Approximately 1,000,000 people live in the Rio Grande Valley region. Residents enjoy the best of both worlds as Brownsville combines inland city living and just 25 miles away is the modern beach resort of South Padre Island.

MSSO Brownsville has served the public with excellence and will continue to provide the public with the best services as the "Guardians of the Rio Grande Valley."

**Story by Cmdr. Gary Wehrmann,
Sector Corpus Christi**

Check out Coast Guard career opportunities! Call 877-NOW USCG



HARD WORK

Seaman Steven "Axe" Axner waits for his next command on the buoy deck of the CGC Frank Drew. The Frank Drew is responsible for servicing 381 buoys that are essential to keeping the seaport in Hampton Roads, Va., in business. An average of 2,500 commercial ships visit this port annually.

Photo by PA1 Donnie Brzuska, LantArea